

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANAMA IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, BA

SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

REF: STATE 225232

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PAPER BEING USED IN CONSULTATIONS
WITH CONGRESS:

BEGIN TEXT: CONSULTATION REGARDING INSTITUTION OF A SMALL,
NEW TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR BAHRAIN.

UNDER 1971 AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN, A
SMALL U.S. NAVAL FORCE (MIDDLE EAST FORCE, KNOWN
COMMONLY AS MIDEASTFOR) IS STATIONED AT BAHRAIN IN THE
PERSIAN GULF. THIS FORCE CONSISTS OF TWO DESTROYERS
AND AN AUXILIARY TYPE FLAGSHIP. MIDEASTFOR HAS BEEN
AT BAHRAIN FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES BUT BEFORE BAHRAIN
OBTAINED ITS INDEPENDENCE IN 1971 WE MAINTAINED MIDEASTFOR
THERE BY AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM.

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IN THE HEAT OF THE ARAB-ISRAEL WAR, THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN SENT THE UNITED STATES A LETTER ON OCTOBER 20, 1973 INVOKING THE PROVISION OF OUR AGREEMENT WITH BAHRAIN THAT EITHER SIDE COULD DECIDE TO TERMINATE THE MIDEASTFOR PRESENCE ON ONE YEAR'S NOTICE.

IN THE LIGHT OF VARIOUS DEVELOPMENTS SINCE LAST OCTOBER, THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN DECIDED TO RECONSIDER ITS ONE-YEAR NOTICE OF TERMINATION OF THE MIDEASTFOR STATIONING AGREEMENT. WE ARE NOW IN DISCUSSION WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN REGARDING CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE MIDEASTFOR AGREEMENT. WE ARE CONFIDENT THESE PARTICULAR ASPECTS WILL BE WORKED OUT SUCCESSFULLY.

THE RETENTION OF MIDEASTFOR AT BAHRAIN WOULD HAVE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE GOING BEYOND THE MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE OF MIDEASTFOR AS SUCH. MIDEASTFOR IS THE ONLY U.S. NAVAL FORCE STATIONED IN AN ARAB COUNTRY. IT IS THE ONLY U.S. NAVAL FORCE STATIONED IN THE STRATEGIC PERSIAN GULF, ABUTTING THE INDIAN OCEAN. A DECISION BY BAHRAIN THAT MIDEASTFOR COULD REMAIN THERE WOULD BE SEEN AS A SIGN OF THE DESIRE OF THIS ARAB STATE FOR CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES. SUCH A DECISION WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE GENERAL DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT IN U.S. RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB WORLD SINCE THE OCTOBER 1973 WAR.

THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN HAS DESIRED, FOR SOME TIME PAST, TO HAVE AMERICAN TECHNICAL EXPERTS ASSOCIATED WITH ITS OWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND PROGRAMS. IT HAS INDICATED A WILLINGNESS TO PAY THE SALARIES OF SUCH U.S. EXPERTS, CONSISTENT WITH THE SALARIES IT PAYS TO OTHER TECHNICAL EXPERTS, IF THE UNITED STATES COULD FIND IT POSSIBLE TO QUOTE TOP OFF UNQUOTE THEIR SALARIES. THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN BELIEVES ITS OWN ECONOMIC EFFORTS COULD BENEFIT SUBSTANTIALLY FROM THE PRESENCE OF U.S. EXPERTS; IN ADDITION, IT COULD POINT TO THE PRESENCE OF U.S. EXPERTS; IN ADDITION, IT COULD POINT TO THE PRESENCE OF THOSE EXPERTS AS CONSISTENT WITH THE OVERALL BROAD POLICY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF BAHRAIN-U.S. COOPERATION REFLECTED IN THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF MIDEASTFOR AT BAHRAIN. AS FOR OURSELVES WE BELIEVE THE PRESENCE OF U.S. TECHNICAL EXPERTS WOULD CONTRIBUTE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, TO COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR U.S. FIRMS IN SUPPLYING BAHRAINI REQUIREMENTS IN VARIOUS FIELDS.

IT IS PROPOSED TO INSTITUTE A SMALL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

PROGRAM UNDER WHICH WE WOULD GRANT FUNDS FOR TOPPING OFF
THE SALARIES OF U.S. TECHNICAL EXPERTS. IT IS PROPOSED
TO ASSIGN UP TO FIVE SUCH EXPERTS IN FY 1975, AND TO
SUPPLEMENT THOSE WITH AN ADDITIONAL SMALL NUMBER OF
EXPERTS IN THE COMING YEAR. END TEXT.

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